



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
P.O. Box 45040, Olympia, Washington 98504-5040

December 11, 2009

Dear Valued Service Partner:

After just a few weeks in Washington, I am pleased to be writing to you about our work together to improve the lives of children and families involved in the child welfare system in this state. We are in the planning phase of implementing performance based contracting, and I want to apprise you of this important effort, and ways that you can be involved, as we proceed.

I am just learning about all of the services that you offer. I have had conversations with a few of you and am impressed with the amount of compassion and dedication that exists as we strive toward our shared goal of safely reducing the number of children in out of home care.

As many of you are aware, House Bill 2106, passed in 2009, directs the Children's Administration to make changes to the way it contracts for services. There are two phases to this change. The first phase will convert contracts to performance based contracts and significantly restructure the service system by consolidating and reducing the number of contracts held by Children's Administration. In other words, our current thinking is to move to Master Contracts with consolidated groups of service. We believe this approach will improve access and quality of services for the children and families we serve. The second phase will purchase child welfare case management in two areas of the state.

With the Children's Administration staff, I have set the following values and expectations for the process of making changes to our contracts:

- We will work openly with our partners and staff as the planning and implementation proceeds.
- Our desired outcomes for children and families are best accomplished through strong partnerships with service providers and other community members.
- All of us will undergo changes as DSHS works toward an integrated organization as one department with one vision, one mission, and one core set of values.
- We must provide proven services that meet the specific needs and culture of each child and family in their own community.

To accomplish the transformation called for by House Bill 2106, we will all have to do business in a new way. The goals of the transformation include reaching better outcomes for children and families, making it easier for social workers to provide the right services to children and families, and achieving more consistent statewide access to a core group of services for every child and family in their community.

This new way of doing business will create new opportunities for the whole child welfare system, both public and private, as the transformation progresses. For example, this will open opportunities for providers to create networks and work closer together toward common goals

and performance outcomes. To begin the transformation process and to get your input, Children's Administration will be holding informational meetings around the state.

Jann Hoppler has been tasked with leading the first phase of the work. She and other Children's Administration staff will be sending out information and posting the dates and times of the informational meetings. Children's Administration will also be providing information such as a list of Frequently Asked Questions on the Children's Administration internet site. You can find this site at <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/partners/transformCW.asp>. Part of the transformation process will require gathering your input on a regular basis. We will utilize email updates and surveys to help with this process.

Children's Administration is also working with the Child Welfare Transformation Design Committee, formed from HB2106, to link the efforts of Children's Administration with the Committee. The department Web site contains a link to the Committee's site which includes valuable information about meeting dates, minutes, sub-committee membership, and more.

The success of each phase of this effort is working in true partnership as we develop a new way of serving the children and families in this state – it is a personal goal of mine to make sure you have every opportunity to participate in changing the way we do business. I want to thank each of you for all that you do to help the children and families we serve together. I look forward to continued and strengthened partnerships that produce even better outcomes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Denise", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Denise Revels Robinson
Assistant Secretary
Children's Administration